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edited by Sandy Chung, Daniel Finer, Ileana Paul, and Eric Potsdam

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## PREFACE

Although the Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association (AFLA) has been holding annual meetings since 1994, until now it has had no consistent approach to the publication of its *Proceedings*. Papers from AFLA 2 and AFLA 14 were published as edited volumes; in other years the local organizers published the *Proceedings* in their Department's Working Papers series; in still other years no *Proceedings* was published. The 16th annual meeting of AFLA was held May 1-3, 2009, at the University of California, Santa Cruz. During the business meeting, the idea was floated that the *Proceedings* henceforth be published electronically, in a consistent format, at the AFLA website (<http://ling.uwo.ca/afla/>), which is generously hosted by the University of Western Ontario. The initial result is this volume, which has emerged very quickly indeed—less than six months after AFLA 16 was held. Our hope is that on-line publication of this and future volumes of the *Proceedings of AFLA* will enable research on the formal linguistics of Austronesian languages to reach as wide a readership as possible.

We want to thank UCSC's Linguistics Department and its Linguistics Research Center for hosting AFLA 16, the authors for submitting their papers so efficiently, and the University of Western Ontario for hosting the website at which this volume is posted. We also wish to acknowledge the precedent set by the *Proceedings of AFLA 12*, which was published on-line as *UCLA Working Papers in Linguistics* No. 12, and whose stylesheet heavily influenced the stylesheet we constructed for the *Proceedings of AFLA*.

Sandra Chung  
Daniel Finer  
Ileana Paul  
Eric Potsdam

## BARE NOUNS, INCORPORATION, AND SCOPE\*

Ileana Paul  
University of Western Ontario  
[ileana@uwo.ca](mailto:ileana@uwo.ca)

This paper questions the connection between bare nouns, incorporation and obligatory narrow scope. Data from Malagasy show that bare nouns take variable scope (wide and narrow) despite being pseudo-incorporated. The resulting typology of incorporation is presented and two analyses of the Malagasy data are explored. The paper concludes with a discussion of the nature of incorporation and indefiniteness.

### 1. Introduction

This paper considers the following question: what is the connection between bare nouns, incorporation, and narrow scope? This question is a natural one to ask because in the literature there are many examples of bare nouns and incorporated nouns taking obligatory narrow scope. Data from Malagasy, however, show that bare nouns can take wide scope, despite being bare and despite being pseudo-incorporated. These data therefore call into question the connection between the syntax of nouns (bareness, incorporation) and their semantics (scope). More broadly, the scope facts of Malagasy bare nouns show us that the mapping between syntax and semantics is not as uniform as one might have expected.

The outline of this paper is as follows: in section 2, I illustrate the basic distribution of bare nouns in Malagasy and section 3 provides evidence for pseudo-incorporation (Massam 2001). In section 4, I show that bare nouns can take variable scope (narrow and wide) and in sections 5 and 6 I discuss some of the theoretical implications of the data. Section 7 concludes.

### 2. Malagasy Bare Nouns

Malagasy is an Austronesian language spoken in Madagascar; the dominant word order is VOS. Bare noun arguments are possible, as shown in (1a,b), but bare nouns are barred from the subject position (1c).<sup>1,2</sup>

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\* This research would not be possible without the input from several native speakers of Malagasy: Rita Hanitramalala, Jean Christophe Jaonesy, Tsiorimalala Randriambololona, Vololona Rasolofoson, Francine Razafimboaka, Martelline Razafindravola, and Rado Razanajatovo. I would also like to thank Sandy Chung, Lisa Matthewson, Hotze Rullmann, as well as audiences at UBC, at the Mass/Count workshop at the University of Toronto, and at AFLA XVI at UC Santa Cruz for their comments. Data are from my own notes, unless otherwise indicated. All errors are my responsibility. This research was supported by the Canada Research Chair program, SSHRC (SRG410-2005-1758), and the University of Western Ontario.

<sup>1</sup> I focus on the direct object position (themes, goals, displaced themes), but bare nouns can be predicates, the complement of any lexical category (N, V, A, P), possessors, agents/causers, possesseees, expressions of time, means, price (see Appendix for some examples).

- (1) a. Manolotra penina izy.  
 AT.offer pen 3(NOM)  
 ‘She offers a pen/pens.’  
 b. Rakofana kopy ny tsaramaso.  
 TT.cover cup DET bean  
 ‘The beans are covered with a cup/cups.’  
 c. \*Lasa mpianatra.  
 gone student  
 ‘A student left.’

[Keenan 1976: 253]

Malagasy has a pre-nominal definite determiner *ny* (1b), but no indefinite determiner, so bare nouns are interpreted as indefinite (novel). All nouns have what is called “general number” (Corbett 2000), that is they are unmarked for singular versus plural. For arguments that bare nouns are unmarked or vague, rather than ambiguous, see Paul 2009. The only way to overtly mark number in the noun phrase is via the demonstratives (2).

- (2) a. Omeo ahy itsy boky itsy.  
 give.IMP 1SG(ACC) DEM book DEM  
 ‘Give me that book.’  
 b. Omeo ahy iretsy boky iretsy.  
 give.IMP 1SG(ACC) DEM.PL book DEM.PL  
 ‘Give me those books.’

[Rajemisa-Raolison 1971: 54]

Thus we see that Malagasy has productive bare noun arguments.

### 3. Incorporation

This section explores more closely the distribution of Malagasy bare nouns and shows that they act like “pseudo-incorporated” nouns in the syntax (Massam 2001). I take this to mean that bare nouns are nominals that remain in VP. In other words, bare nouns do not have to move out of the VP for case reasons.

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<sup>2</sup> Abbreviations used in this paper are:

1	first person	FUT	future
2	second person	GEN	genitive
3	third person	IMP	imperative
ACC	accusative	LOC	locative
AT	actor topic	NOM	nominative
CT	circumstantial topic	P	preposition
DEF	definite determiner	PL	plural
DEM	demonstrative	SG	singular
DET	determiner	TOP	topic
FOC	focus	TT	theme topic

As a first sign of incorporation, under the right phonological conditions the verb and the noun form a single phonological word (a single main stress). The details of this “phonological incorporation” are described in Keenan and Polinsky 1998, but I provide some illustrative examples below.

- (3) a. manapaka hazo → manapa-kazo  
AT.cut wood  
‘cut wood’  
b. mivarotra vary → mivaro-bary  
AT.sell rice  
‘sell rice’

[Malzac 1960: 97]

Second, the bare noun must be adjacent to the verb and cannot scramble, unlike NPs with a determiner (Rackowski 1998). The examples in (4) illustrate the strict adjacency for bare nouns.

- (4) a. Mamitaka ankizy matetika Rabe.  
AT.trick child often Rabe  
‘Rabe often tricks children.’  
b. \*Mamitaka matetika ankizy Rabe.  
AT.trick often child Rabe

The examples in (5) show that nominals with a determiner can scramble to the right of an adverb, unlike what we just saw for bare nouns.

- (5) a. Mamitaka ny ankizy matetika Rabe.  
AT.trick DET child often Rabe  
‘Rabe often tricks the children.’  
b. Mamitaka matetika ny ankizy Rabe.  
AT.trick often DET child Rabe  
‘Rabe often tricks the children.’

Finally, although most of the examples in this paper are of bare noun heads, it is possible to show that these can be full noun phrases, including modifiers. The examples below illustrate coordinated bare nouns (6a) and bare nouns modified by adjectives (6b) and relative clauses (6c).

- (6) a. COORDINATION  
Mivaro- [bary sy hena] ity vehivavy ity.  
AT.sell rice and meat DEM woman DEM  
‘This woman sells rice and meat.’  
b. ADJECTIVAL MODIFICATION  
Mivaro- [bary vazaha] ity vehivavy ity.  
AT.sell rice foreigner DEM woman DEM  
‘This woman sells white rice.’

c. MODIFICATION BY A RELATIVE CLAUSE

Mivaro- [bary izay jinjan- dRaso] ity vehivavy ity.  
 AT.sell rice REL TT.harvest Raso DEM woman DEM  
 ‘This woman sells rice that Raso harvests.’

In this section we have seen syntactic evidence that Malagasy bare nouns undergo pseudo-incorporation. The next section looks more closely at the interpretation of bare nouns.

#### 4. Scope

As mentioned in the introduction, cross-linguistically bare nouns tend to take narrow scope (see Section 5 for more discussion and references). It is therefore somewhat surprising to see that Malagasy bare nouns allow both wide and narrow scope.<sup>3</sup> The data below show scopal interactions with a variety of elements. First, in (7) and (8), I give examples of opaque contexts. The example in (7a) sets up the context with a bare noun *dokotera* ‘doctor’ in the scope of *te* ‘want’. It is possible to follow this up with either (7b), the narrow scope reading, or (7c), the wide scope reading.

- (7) a. Te hanam- bady dokotera aho nefa ...  
 want FUT.AT.have spouse doctor 1SG(NOM) C  
 ‘I want to marry a doctor but ...’  
 b. ... mbola tsy mahita.  
 still NEG AT.see  
 ‘... I still haven’t found one.’  
 c. ... mipetraka lavitra ahy izy.  
 AT.live far 1SG(ACC) 3(NOM)  
 ‘... he lives far from me.’

Similarly, (8a) shows a narrow scope reading of *alika* ‘dog’ with respect to *mitady* ‘look for’, while (8b) provides the wide scope interpretation.

- (8) a. Mitady alika aho – na alika inona na alika inona.  
 AT.look-for dog 1SG(NOM) or dog what or dog what  
 ‘I’m looking for a dog – any dog.’  
 b. Mitady alika aho – kely sy mainty ilay izy.  
 AT.look-for dog 1SG(NOM) small and black DEF 3(NOM)  
 ‘I’m looking for a dog – it’s small and black.’

The examples in (9) illustrate a similar pattern with the modal *tokony* ‘should’: (9a) is the narrow scope reading for the bare noun *boky* ‘book’, while in (9b) the bare noun has wide scope.

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<sup>3</sup> I have yet to investigate whether bare nouns can take so-called intermediate scope.

- (9) a. Tokony hamaky boky ianao – na boky inona na boky inona.  
 should FUT.AT.read book 2SG(NOM) or book what or book what  
 ‘You should read a book – any book.’  
 b. Tokony hamaky boky ianao – “farihy manga” ny anarany.  
 should FUT.AT.read book 2SG(NOM) lake blue DET name.3(GEN)  
 ‘You should read a book – “Blue Lake” is its title.’

Finally, the data in (10) illustrate the variable scope of bare nouns with respect to other quantificational elements, such as universal quantifiers and negation. In particular, in (10d) the bare noun *dokotera* ‘doctor’ scopes over negation (*ttsy*).

- (10)a. Namaky boky frantsay ny mpianatra rehetra.  
 PST.AT.read book French DET student all  
 ‘All the students read a French book.’ ( $\forall > \exists$  or  $\exists > \forall$ )  
 b. Tsy nahasitrana zaza ny dokotera. Marary loatra ilay izy.  
 NEG PST.CAUSE.cure child DET doctor sick too DEM 3(NOM)  
 ‘The doctor was not able to cure a child. He (the child) was too sick.’  
 c. Tsy namaky boky aho satria sarotra loatra ilay izy.  
 NEG PST.AT.read book 1SG(NOM) because hard too DEF 3(NOM)  
 ‘I didn’t read a book<sub>i</sub> because it<sub>i</sub> was too difficult.’  
 d. Tsy nanam- bady dokotera aho satria  
 NEG PST.AT.have spouse doctor 1SG(NOM) because  
 nipetraka lavitra ahy izy.  
 PST.AT.live far 1SG(ACC) 3(NOM)  
 ‘I didn’t marry a doctor<sub>i</sub> because he<sub>i</sub> lived far from me.’

Before continuing, I would like to point out that I am not probing the possibility of anaphora between the bare noun and a pronoun, per se – I am interested in the wide scope reading, which is made salient by using a pronoun in the above examples. I mention this distinction because the “discourse transparency” of incorporated nouns (the ability to antecede a pronoun) is subject to much debate in the literature. For example, Mithun (1984) and Dayal (2007) both suggest that whether or not discourse anaphora is possible is determined by the nature of the pronominal, rather than the nature of the incorporated nominal.

Summing up, we have seen that bare nouns allow variable scope. I have only found one potential counterexample, given in (11). This example appears to illustrate what is called “differentiated scope” or “narrowest scope”: the bare noun *alika* ‘dog’ obligatorily scopes under the quantificational element *eny rehetra* ‘everywhere’.

- (11) Misy alika (\*iray) eny rehetra eny.  
 AT.exist dog (one) LOC all LOC  
 ‘Dogs are everywhere.’

I suggest, however, that the scope facts in (11) are a result of the existential verb *misy*, which forces narrow scope on the pivot (*alika* ‘dog’). In sum, the data we have seen thus far indicate that Malagasy bare nouns are pseudo-incorporated and that they can take wide scope. The next section explores the consequences of these facts.

## **5. The Syntax-Semantics Interface**

I now return to the question asked at the beginning of the paper: why do we think there should be a correlation between bare nouns, incorporation, and narrow scope? Why are the Malagasy data surprising? As I mentioned earlier, bare nouns in many languages take obligatory narrow scope. The facts for English bare plurals are famously discussed in Carlson 1977: bare plurals take narrow scope.

(12) Everyone read books on caterpillars. ( $\forall > \exists$  but  $*\exists > \forall$ )

The same is true in many other languages: Brazilian Portuguese (Schmitt and Munn 2000), Chinese (Rullmann and You 2006), Hebrew (Borer 2005), Indonesian (Chung 2000), Javanese (Sato 2008), Turkish (Bliss 2003), to name just a few. Moreover, incorporated nouns take narrow scope:<sup>4</sup> see for example van Geenhoven 1998 and Wharram 2003 for detailed discussion of Inuktitut.

This pattern of facts has led many researchers to propose that nominals that form a tight unit with the predicate typically share the same semantic properties (e.g. narrow scope) (Dobrovie-Sorin, Bleam and Espinal 2006, Farkas and de Swart 2003). In particular, these researchers claims that the special morphosyntax of bare and incorporated nouns is a signal of special semantics. Van Geenhoven (1998) takes this one step further by arguing that all low scoping indefinites (e.g. English bare plurals) are “semantically incorporated” (see also Dayal 2007 on Hindi).

Table 1 provides a provisional typology of incorporation. Across the top row are languages that have semantic incorporation (narrow scope). These subdivide into languages that use special morpho-syntax and those that do not. (This division is not so clear-cut, but I follow Farkas and de Swart (2003) and assume that the crucial sign of morpho-syntactic incorporation is at the very least an adjacency effect.) As shown in the table, there are languages where certain nominals take narrow scope, without being incorporated: English bare plurals as discussed above, as well as Maori and St’át’imcets DPs headed by special determiners (Chung and Ladusaw 2004, Matthewson 1996). The bottom row represents languages (or constructions) where there is no semantic incorporation (variable scope). Again, freedom of scope can correspond to no morpho-syntactic incorporation, as with most DPs. The Malagasy case is where there is an apparent conflict between the morpho-syntax and the semantics.

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<sup>4</sup> In Mohawk, Mapudungun, and Nahuatl the incorporated nominal can be definite, generic or indefinite, but not specific indefinite (Mithun 1984, Baker 1996, Baker et al. 2004). I take this interpretative possibility to be connected to the fact that these languages do not otherwise overtly mark (in)definiteness (e.g. via determiners).



	MORPHO-SYNTACTIC INC	NO MORPHO-SYNTACTIC INC
SEMANTIC INC	Inuktitut	English bare plurals
	Niuean	Maori <i>he</i>
	Romance bare singulars	St'át'imcets <i>ku</i>
NO SEMANTIC INC	Malagasy bare nouns	ordinary DPs

Table 1: Typology of Incorporation

Looking at this table, one can ask if the Malagasy data are truly exceptional or if we expect there to be more languages that belong in this category. I discuss these options in the next section.

## 6. Remaining Questions

As noted in the preceding section, the distribution and interpretation of Malagasy bare nouns raise the following question: can bare nouns take wide scope? More precisely, given the overall cross-linguistic pattern of bare nouns and scope, do we want to build it into our theory that bare nouns can take variable scope? If the answer is yes, then the Malagasy facts are not surprising and the role of this paper is simply to expand the typology of bare nouns. After all, why should the semantics care if a noun is bare or not? If, on the other hand, the answer is no, then the Malagasy data need to be explained. In this section, I explore one possible alternative analysis of bare nouns. I also discuss some of the implications of the data for analyses of the so-called Definiteness Restriction on the subject position.

### 6.1. Null Determiners

Let us assume that we want a unified analysis of bare nouns that guarantees narrow scope. In order to account for the wide scope of Malagasy bare nouns, one can then posit that these nouns aren't bare at all – they are headed by a null indefinite determiner. In other words, while in languages that have incorporation, the incorporated element is an N or an NP, bare nouns in Malagasy are in fact DPs. What are the consequences of this null determiner? In fact, the null determiner can help explain the syntax of bare nouns: as we have seen, bare nouns in Malagasy are restricted in distribution. We saw earlier that bare nouns are not possible in subject position (1c) and they cannot scramble (4). They also can't be topicalized (13a), and they can't raise to object (13b).

- (13)a. \*Bibilava dia mikisaka.  
           snake TOP AT.crawl  
           'Snakes crawl.'
- b. Mihevitra \*(ny) ankizy ho hendry Rabe.  
    AT.think DET child C well-behaved Rabe  
    'Rabe believes the children to be well-behaved.'

Null heads typically require special licensing conditions (see e.g. Contreras 1986 on Romance). This licensing has typically been formalized using the ECP, but Landau (2007) has provided a

Minimalist account. He argues that the EPP is a PF constraint that requires the head of the moved element to be overtly realized. If we adopt this analysis for Malagasy, DPs headed by a null determiner (bare nouns) will not be able to undergo movement – in some sense they are invisible to the feature that drives movement.

The null determiner also allows us to explain the semantics of apparently bare nouns in Malagasy: the null determiner is semantically equivalent to English ‘a’ or ‘some’ and therefore allows variable scope. It is crucial that the null determiner be indefinite: Malagasy bare nouns do not induce domain restriction – they must be novel, as shown in (14). The bare noun *zazalahy* ‘boy’ cannot be used to refer back to a subset of the children introduced in the previous sentence.

- (14) Nisy zazakely tao an-trano. #Nahafantatra zazalahy aho.  
 PST.AT.exist child there ACC house PST.AT.know boy 1SG(NOM)  
 ‘There were children in the house. I knew boys.’  
 (consultant’s reaction: “the two sentences don’t go together”)

Thus we have both syntactic and semantic evidence in favor of a null determiner heading bare nouns. Note that this “determiner” may in fact occupy a functional head other than D°, such as Num° (see e.g. Lyons 1999 for discussion). Ideally, future research will determine whether or not such a null element is well motivated for Malagasy.

## 6.2. Subjects/Topics/Triggers

As noted above, bare nouns are not permitted in the subject position in Malagasy. Traditionally, this restriction has been taken to be a kind of Definiteness/Specificity Restriction on the subject position in Malagasy, and has led some researchers to conclude that the subject is in fact a topic (see Pearson 2005 for a discussion of this debate). Recent work, however, has shown that the subject in Malagasy does not have to be definite or specific (Law 2006, Keenan 2008a,b, Paul to appear). In (15), for example, the DP subjects *ny hazo* ‘a tree’ and *ny zazalahy anankiray* ‘one young man’ have not been previously mentioned (they are novel) and they are not the focus of later reference in the discourse.

- (15)a. Ka nandrositra sady nokapohiko ny hazo...  
 then PST.AT.run-away and PST.TT.hit.1SG(GEN) DET tree  
 ‘Then I ran away and hit a tree...’ [Fugier 1999: 17]  
 b. Raha vao tafiditra Rabako dia nitsangana ny zazalahy anankiray  
 when new enter Rabako TOP PST.AT.stand-up DET boy one  
 ary nanome azy ny toerany.  
 and PST.AT.give 3(ACC) DET place.3(GEN)  
 ‘As soon as Rabako entered [the bus] a young man stood up and gave her his place.’  
 [Keenan 2008b: 335]

Moreover, it is possible to have a negative polarity item (*na iza na iza* ‘anyone’) in the subject position, as illustrated in (16).

- (16) Tsy mahatakatra izany na iza na iza.  
 NEG AT.reach DEM or who or who  
 ‘No one can afford that.’

[Dez 1990: 325]

Keenan (2008a) discusses the interpretation of subjects in Malagasy and claims that the subject is presuppositional and takes obligatory wide scope. It is possible, however, to elicit examples where the subject scopes under negation (the example in (16) also illustrates negation scoping over the subject).<sup>5</sup>

- (17) Tsy hitako ny mpianatra rehetra.  
 NEG see.1SG(GEN) DET student all  
 ‘I didn’t see all the students.’ ( $\forall > \neg$  and  $\neg > \forall$ )

So why does the subject have to be a DP? I suggest that this restriction is a surface or PF constraint that requires the subject to be headed by a determiner or a demonstrative or to be a pronoun or proper name. Another way of phrasing this constraint is to say that the subject requires overt material in D° (all proper names occur with a determiner *Ra* or *i* and pronouns are arguably determiners). Note that such a constraint is strongly reminiscent of the EPP as formulated by Landau (2007), as discussed in the previous section. Once again, more research is required to determine whether such a constraint is adequate to account for the full range of Malagasy data.

## 7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown that bare nouns in Malagasy can take variable scope despite the fact that they are pseudo-incorporated. At the very least, the data presented in this paper indicate that the typology of bare nouns is richer than previously acknowledged. More precisely, the morpho-syntactic signs of incorporation do not always correlate with a particular semantic interpretation (narrow scope). A proper analysis of the data awaits further work, but at this stage there appear to be two options. First, we can take the data at face value and conclude that the syntax-semantics mapping is not as uniform as previously assumed. In particular, the form of nominals does not always indicate their interpretation. The other approach denies appearances and posits the existence of a null determiner. The plausibility of the second approach lies in further motivating this null head (e.g. by looking at the syntactic distribution of bare nouns) and also in how committed we are to using interpretative facts (e.g. scope) to motivate particular syntactic structures (e.g. a null functional head).

A question now arises: what is the role of incorporation in Malagasy? As we have seen, incorporation is typically associated with a particular semantics. But we have seen that this

<sup>5</sup> A lot more work is necessary on scope in Malagasy – subjects don’t allow distributive readings (without an overt distributive marker or bound pronoun).

(i) Namidin’ ny mpivarotra efatra ny akoho telo.  
 PST.TT.sell DET merchant four DET chicken three  
 ‘Four merchants sold three chickens.’ (total number of chickens is three, not twelve)

connection is not borne out in Malagasy. But the Malagasy pattern may be due to the fact that the language has no other means to signal wide-scoping indefinites in the object position. Incorporation in Malagasy may therefore be prosodic in nature, rather than syntactic or morphological. Again, more research on the prosody of Malagasy is necessary to determine if such an approach is valid.

#### **Appendix: Some Examples of Bare Nouns in Different Syntactic Positions**

- (1) PREDICATE  
Vorona ny goaika.  
bird DET crow  
'The crow is a bird.'
- (2) COMPLEMENT OF N  
rindrina vato  
wall stone  
'wall of stone'
- (3) COMPLEMENT OF A  
feno rano  
full water  
'full of water'
- (4) COMPLEMENT OF P  
Mipetraka akaiky fitehirizam- boky aho.  
AT.live near guarding book 1SG(NOM)  
'I live near a library.'
- (5) POSSESSOR  
volon' akoho  
hair chicken  
'chicken feathers'
- (6) AGENT  
resin- jaza  
defeat child  
'defeated by a child'
- (7) TIME  
Tonga maraina teo Ralay.  
arrive morning here Ralay  
'Ralay passed by here this morning.'

- (8) MEANS  
mandeha tongotra  
AT.go foot  
'go on foot'

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